"You will not permit what?" I asked in consternation.

"You said '*It is not true*.' If what Hilferding said is not true he must be a liar! I will not permit—"

Hell broke out, a dozen people shouting. Wells fell back into his chair, with closed eyes and his head sunk on his breast, sound asleep. Leipart asked me to continue, but the effect of my speech was completely lost. I elaborated the technical and financial aspects of the Plan. Nobody listened—for the union people this was old stuff and the Reichstag deputies did not care. After a few remarks from both sides, Leipart put the ADGB plan to a vote. All the representatives of the unions raised their hands in favor of it, all the representatives of the party except Baade voted "nay."

The break between the party and the unions was complete.[6]

THE END OF THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC

The Weimar Republic was crumbling. The Nazis and the Communists, who together had an absolute majority in the Prussian Landtag, by a joint vote overthrew the Prussian government headed by Otto Braun, the strong man of the S-D party. Since the Landtag did not have the working majority requisite to appoint a new cabinet, Von Papen took over the administration of Prussia, thus adding the Prussian police to the other strongholds controlled by the monarchists—the army, the judiciary, the schools, and the presidency. Next, Von Papen offered Hitler the Vice-Chancellorship, but Hitler rejected the offer. He would take nothing less than the post of the head of the government. At the new elections held early in November, the Nazis again got one third of the votes; though their forces in the Reichstag went down slightly, their losses were more than offset by the gains of the Communists. The combined strength of these two parties increased from 289 to 296 seats.

In Berlin and other German cities the streets were now in the hands of private quasi-military organizations—the brown-shirted shock troops of Hitler; the armed groups of the Steel Helmets, controlled by the old-regime military brass; Communist commandos. Hitler's troops were the most arrogant. They paraded with drums and bugles, the head squad of the column often armed with rifles and machine guns. The tune of their marching song was that of the Communist *Internationale*, but the words were different:

[6] I realize now that my impression of Hilferding's speech at our conference was false. He sincerely believed all he said about the labor-value theory: Let the world perish but save the dogma! There was tragedy in his folly, as in his end. Delivered by the Vichy police to Hitler's hangmen after the fall of France, he took his life.